

A Partnership For Economic Development



Transportation
Quality of Life
Education & Workforce
Business Development

"A government can be no better than the public opinion which sustains it."

Franklin Delano Roosevelt



"Focus Macomb" is a group of nearly 100 leaders in business, education, healthcare and government working together to strengthen Macomb County's ability to retain and attract business. Launched in March 2006 with direction from Nancy White, Chair of the Macomb County Board of Commissioners, members of Focus Macomb have devoted countless hours to examining the issues that impact economic development in the county through four solution driven committees:

1. Business Development
2. Education/Workforce Development
3. Quality of Life
4. Transportation

Each committee has prepared recommendations for presentation to the Macomb County Board of Commissioners.

Leadership

Focus Macomb Co-Chairs

Roy Rose

President; Anderson, Eckstein and Westrick, Inc
(With support to Quality of Life and Transportation)

Donald Torline

President; Baker College of Clinton Township
(With support to Business Development & Education/Workforce Development)

Business Development Co-Chairs

Rick Kincaid, CEO; K & F Electronics

Ron Reed, CEO; Community Central Bank

Education Co-Chairs

Barbara Rossmann, President & CEO; St. Joseph Mercy of Macomb

Frank Blowers, CEO; Lakeside Community Bank

Quality of Life Co-Chairs

Paul Socia, CEO; Citizens State Bank

Karen Parenteau; Health Alliance Plan

Transportation Co-Chairs

Anthony Lombardo, CEO; Lombardo Development

Anthony Viviano, CEO; Sterling Heights Dodge

Macomb County Department of Planning & Economic Development has also provided significant support to the work of these committees:

Stephen N. Cassin, AICP; Executive Director

Donald Morandini; Deputy Director

Cheryl Bushbaker; Clerical Supervisor

John Crumm; Program Manager for Planning & Environmental Services

Kate Doyle; Account Clerk

Jason Friedmann; Senior Planner

Sharon Laskowski; ADO Clerical Coordinator

Rachael Lisecki, Graphics Technician

Mike Rozny; Program Manager for Community Development

Robert Tess; Program Manager for Economic Development

Justin Robinson; Associate Planner

Jeff Schroeder; Program Manager for Graphic Information Services/
Graphic Design

Maria Zardis; Grants Coordinator



On behalf of the 95 members of Focus Macomb, we are pleased to present our first-ever set of recommendations to the Macomb County Board of Commissioners. In doing so, we commend Chair Nancy White and the Board for recognizing the need to form a more collaborative partnership between government, education, and the private sector as a means of strengthening economic development in the county.

It has been an honor for us to work with the inaugural members of Focus Macomb. Since March 2006, when Focus Macomb was launched, our members have contributed a total of 641 individual hours in meetings. This, of course, does not include the additional hours spent preparing for meetings and reading provided materials. Considering the magnitude of experience and expertise that each member offers, the value of these hours is significant.

The spirit of volunteerism demonstrated by this group clearly indicates an obvious commitment to a better future for Macomb. Each of the four committees worked diligently to develop consensus in formulating a set of recommendations designed to move our county forward. In doing so, members were asked to absorb a great deal of information from a variety of resources and expert speakers. Armed with knowledge, they then engaged in lively - and often impassioned - discussion about the challenges and opportunities we face as a county.

The enclosed pages are the result of that process. Each committee provides background information about the perceived obstacles for advancing economic development, suggestions for overcoming those barriers and a pledge to help move each recommendation forward. As a group, we are enthusiastic, ready and available for the next stage: implementation.

It is our sincere hope that these recommendations are met in the spirit in which they are intended: to begin the process of working together to develop a comprehensive plan for enhancing our county's image as a great place to work, live and play. We believe in the recommendations and are prepared to stand behind any and all of them.

This is only the beginning. We fully expect that the issues that affect our business climate, the skills of our workforce, the way in which people and goods move in and out of the county and the amenities our communities have to offer will continue to evolve and change.



Donald Torline, President
Baker College of Clinton Township



Roy Rose, President
Anderson, Eckstein and Westrick



2006 Focus Macomb Members

Co-Chair: Donald Torline, President
Baker College of Clinton Township

Co-Chair: Roy Rose, President
Anderson, Eckstein and Westrick

Business & Economic Development

Ron Reed, Co-Chair
Community Central Bank

Rick Kincaid, Co-Chair
K & F Electronics

William Andre
Hydra-Lock Corporation

Luke Bonner
City of Sterling Heights

Robert Bova
Armada Rubber Manufacturing

Ron Chriss
DTE Energy

Karen Czernel
Office of Congresswoman
Candice Miller

Melanie Davis
Macomb Chamber

John Hill
Midwest Mold

John Murphy
Jarvis Construction Services

Robert Kegerreis
Burtek, Inc.

Brian Kern
J.G. Kern Enterprises

Diana Kolakowski
City of Warren

Ed Kubes
Lakeside Mall

Jim Lindsay
Acra Grinding

Michael Malone
Partners in Architecture, PLC

Gary Popiel
Henry Ford/Bi-County
Hospital

Bill Quinlan
Quinlan Associates Architects

Lou Sabel
United Machining, Inc.

Ted Schollenberger
Mineral Springs Development

Terence Thomas, Sr.
St. John Health

Chester Zochowski
REI Group

Education & Workforce Committee

Frank Blowers, Co-Chair
Lakeside Community Bank

Barbara Rossmann, Co-Chair
St. Joseph Healthcare

Dominic Abbate
Wakely Associates

Mike Aggeler
John's Lumber

Don Calcaterra
Towne Mortgage

Diana Cruz
United Machining

Misty Delegato
Relevar Home Care

Richard Deneweth
MEA-NEA Local 1

Mike Devault
Macomb Intermediate School
District

Nancy Falcone
United Auto Workers, Region 1

Melody Gorno
Davenport University

Judy Hartwell
Office of Congressman Sander
Levin

Richard Hein
TI Automotive

Jim Jacobs
Macomb Community College

Alisha Maria Johnson
Dupont Auto Systems

Al Lorenzo
Macomb Community College

Kathleen McIntyre
Ford Motor Company

Lou Moss
Unlimited Enterprises

Kurt Nerva
PTI Engineered Plastics

John Nitz
O'Reilly & Rancilo

DiAnne Pellerin
L'Anse Creuse Public Schools

Scott Smith
Comcast

Joe Wentrack
Plante & Moran, P.C.

Transportation Committee

Anthony Viviano, Co-Chair
Sterling Heights Dodge

Anthony Lombardo, Co-Chair
Lombardo Companies

Lillian Adams
Sterling/Utica/Shelby
Chamber of Commerce

Benjamin Aloia
Aloia & Associates

Jesse Berger
Berger & Sons

Doug Brown
ASTI Environmental

Gina Cavaliere
Warren DDA/TIFA

Maura Cook
DaimlerChrysler

Michael Deyak
Premier Financial Credit Union

Dan Dirks
SMART

Fran Gillett
Macomb County Road
Commission

Ed Hoover
Rizzo Services

Richard Ives
John Carlo, Inc.

David Lakin
Spalding DeDecker Associates

Marilyn Lane
Lane Development

Pat Lehman
Consultant

Ralph (Skip) Maccarone
Shelby Township

Vic Martin
Best Western Sterling Inn

Robert Milewski
Mt. Clemens Regional Medical
Center

Bill Westrick
Anderson, Eckstein and
Westrick

Greg Windingland
Lombardo Companies

Quality of Life Committee

Paul Socia, Co-Chair
Citizen's State Bank

Karen Parenteau, Co-Chair
Health Alliance Plan

Ameldia Brown
St. Joseph Healthcare

Tony Comito
TACOM

Ken DeCock
Boyka's Farm Market

James Flom
Thunder Bay Pattern Works

Larry Garrisi
Sunshine Homes &
Developments

Tom Guastello
Center Management

Tom Horton
Waste Management

James Kaye
Macomb Community Bank

Scott Kowalkowski
Colasanti Group

Frank Marella
CARE House

Gayle McClenahan
Beaumont Hospitals

Arthur Mullen
Mount Clemens DDA

Karl Oskoian
General Dynamics Land
Systems

Jon Peterson
AT&T

Guy Rizzo
GTR Builders

Jim Safian
Premier Financial Credit Union

Mounir Sharobeem
Judson Center

Grace Shore
Central Macomb Chamber



Business Development Committee Recommendations

Proposal:

Formally establish an ongoing committee, perhaps to be called the Focus Macomb Business Advisory Council, to provide advice to the Macomb County Planning and Economic Development Department (MCPED) as well as promote successful business growth in Macomb County.

A. Functions

- 1. Advise MCPED as an advocate for business development** in Macomb County. Specific initiatives that have been identified are:
 - a. Enhance dissemination of information to businesses about assistance available at MCPED and other government programs. This would include direct promotion (e-mail, web links, mail etc.) and promotion through chambers of commerce and other trade groups.
 - b. Increase support for the retention and growth of existing businesses. Specific needed support that has been identified includes:
 1. Work to increase the support provided by the Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) to help local businesses qualify for contracts with the federal government.
 2. Facilitate networking between county businesses and government defense installations such as TACOM , Selfridge ANG Base, General Dynamics, Army.
 3. Support the establishment of office hours for Automation Alley at a county facility, possibly the administration building.
 4. Management guidance for businesses.
 5. Incubator space and shared use facilities.
 6. Identify and promote sources of venture capital investment and other early stage business financing.
 7. Assist set up and maintenance of web sites.
 8. Promote home office utilization.
 9. Coordinate a mentor program with experienced business people.
 10. Help implement the transfer of technology from “the shelf” of big companies to small, local companies for implementation.

- c. Improve county based business sales to buyers located within the county by:
 - 1. Creating a directory of county based businesses, including product descriptions, which would be distributed throughout the county.
 - 2. Establishment of a local business newspaper for all businesses.
 - 3. Launching an awareness campaign such as “Buy Locally”.
 - 4. Expanding communications through website links.
- d. Heighten the promotion of Macomb County for new business investment by:
 - 1. Prepare a plan for identifying and attracting employers in the industries identified in the Intellitrends report i.e. advanced manufacturing, advanced automotive, defense, homeland security as well as healthcare and social assistance.
 - 2. Aggressively promoting the county as a great place to do business at conventions, foreign trade trips and other opportunities.
 - 3. Coordinate group sharing at trade shows in other states etc. to share the costs.
 - 4. Identify and evaluate successful business attraction tactics in other communities, including creative tax abatements, land grants, zoning opportunities, environmental assistance etc.
 - 5. Determine the feasibility of new types of businesses in the county, then pursue businesses in those industries, such as:
 - i. Alternative fuels like cellulosic ethanol.
 - ii. Life sciences.
 - iii. Auto related research and development.
 - 6. Develop and promote an improved “development ready” attitude in the county and within the municipalities, that could include:
 - i. Fast track approvals for permits.
 - ii. Identification of top potential sites.

2. Promote successful business growth in Macomb County by acting as a countywide organization representing the interests of businesses in the county. Needed functions that have been identified include:

- a. Organize networking opportunities.
- b. Provide relevant seminars.
- c. Organize forums for interaction with MCPED along with networking.
- d. Promote positive press.
- e. Sponsor relevant speakers.
- f. Create a speakers bureau and reach out to the community with a positive message such as “Macomb County is a great place to do business.”
- g. Advocate tax and other political initiatives.
- h. Promote the benefits of membership in Automation Alley, which include networking, seminars, event communication, press releases and resume postings.
- i. Create a “Manufacturing Network” within Automation Alley.
 - Have Macomb County serve as the base county for the network.
 - Have networking events focused on the manufacturing community.
- j. Work with local and regional chambers of commerce to promote our initiatives and their activities.
- k. Promote utilization of the county’s business website www.MacombBusiness.com as

a one-stop clearing house to post information and events of interest to the business community.

I. Provide public recognition of outstanding businesses by giving awards, etc.

B. Structure

We propose that the Council consist of 20 people who represent the interests of businesses in the county. The initial members would be those current members of the Focus Macomb Business Development Committee who wish to serve. Remaining openings could be filled by appointment by the co-chairs of Focus Macomb.

Members would serve two year terms and would be eligible to serve no more than three terms. Half of the initial members would be appointed for a three year term thereby staggering the term expirations to half of the membership each year. The nominating committee of the council would nominate for election (or re-election) each year.

Officers will consist of chairperson, vice chair person, secretary, treasurer and two officers. Each year the nominating committee will nominate, and the council will elect, a vice chairperson, secretary, treasurer and one of the officers. The following year, the vice chairperson becomes chairperson. The officers serve staggered two year terms.

The executive directors of the county's chambers of commerce will have a standing invitation to attend the meetings of the business council.

C. Staff

Council members will volunteer their time. We ask that clerical support be provided by MCPED (for meeting minutes, agendas, correspondence, mailings, etc.).

A committee will be formed to pursue sources of money for an executive director and support staff. Grant money will be one of the avenues explored.

D. Meeting schedule and location

The council will meet at the county administration building with the MCPED director and selected staff every other month at a date and time agreed upon.

The frequency and location of additional council and committee meetings will be determined.

E. Goals

The overall goal of the council will be to create meaningful improvements in the success of existing businesses in the county as well as help attract additional employers to the county. Specific goals and measurements of progress will be determined.

F. Research

The research for this proposal consisted primarily of first hand experiences and recommendations of the members of our committee. We had two speakers, one from Automation Alley and the other was an inventor who shared his challenges and successes in developing an original product for sale. Our committee also visited the offices of Automation Alley in Troy.

G. What we are willing to do

Each member of our committee has devoted a significant amount of time in developing this proposal. We are committing to continue that contribution of time in an effort to make this proposal a success.

H. What we ask of the Board of Commissioners

We request your commitment to have MCPED work with the council in good faith. We also ask that the board be open to providing funding for initiatives that the council proposes. We are requesting the clerical support mentioned above. We will also need advice and assistance for determining the legal structure of this organization and the development of organizational documents.

I. Additional recommendations

a. We recommend that the entire Focus Macomb structure be continued with regular interaction between the committees. One area of particular concern to business development is the perceived need to improve the preparation of the workforce in the county. Specific needs identified by our committee were:

1. Promote and expand entrepreneurial training at the college level.
2. Increase business internship opportunities for high school and college students.
3. Promote “real world” training in high school such as personal financial management, appropriate attitude and dress in the business environment, etc..
4. Support the establishment of a four year research or technical university, perhaps through the expansion of Macomb Community College.

b. We also recommend a professional evaluation of the structure, staffing, performance and accountability of the MCPED. Our committee feels that the economic development function could be much more successful with the addition of proven business development staff members along with the added discipline of being held accountable for achieving specific performance targets.

c. In addition, we recommend a study be conducted to determine the feasibility and benefits of a separate, non-profit economic development organization (similar to Automation Alley) that would work in conjunction with MCPED but would have greater flexibility in raising money as well as spending money on such things as:

- i. Facilities and support to “incubate” fledgling companies.
- ii. Travel to visit potential clients.
- iii. Cash incentives to help re-locate businesses.
- iv. People to go on retention calls to out of area headquarters offices.
- v. Additional services such as a business directory, providing seminars, mentorship programs etc.



Education and Workforce Committee Recommendations

Committee Charge

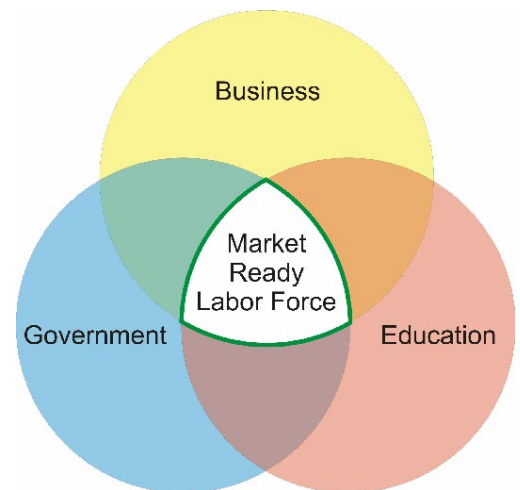
The Focus Macomb Education and Workforce Development Committee is charged with examining issues that affect how education opportunities for residents affect economic development in Macomb County. The committee is tasked with developing recommendations and strategies that enhance, strengthen and expand the overall economic success of Macomb County by leveraging existing partnerships and creating new collaborative associations.

Guiding Statement

The county supports the development of educational programs and an educational infrastructure that benefits economic development and quality of life in Macomb County.

Overview

The Education and Workforce Development Committee recognizes that education, business and government must engage in strong and innovative partnerships to create a competitive advantage. These partnerships should be thoroughly explored to best leverage existing resources and identify areas for improvement. The product of these partnerships should aid the county in developing a strong culture of education that results in a more diverse and “market ready” labor force best suited to compete in our changing global economy.



Further, we recognize that the current business model employed by the county is primarily based on a philosophy of maintaining the lowest tax rate in the region. We strongly recommend a shift to a business model that balances the tax rate with the benefits of wise investments in our future. **We must invest in ourselves.**

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been formulated by the Education and Workforce Committee and are aligned with a body of research that includes current market trends, economic fore

casts, the findings of the county's **Intellitrends** study and the professional insight of the subcommittee's members.

FOCUS MACOMB WORKFORCE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop and support programs to encourage a countywide culture of education.
2. Develop a governmental structure better able to support and provide leadership in economic development.
3. Dedicate resources for research and forecasting to project future workforce, education and retraining needs for both existing and emerging businesses.
4. Establish a committee to showcase and promote the multi-cultural aspects of Macomb County.
5. Support the establishment of 4-year public higher education programs.
6. Develop a unified media and marketing strategy that promotes Macomb County's "Market Ready" Workforce and customized training opportunities.

DEVELOP AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS TO ENCOURAGE A COUNTYWIDE CULTURE OF EDUCATION

Rationale / Benefits

Post-secondary education is a critical link to economic development as highlighted by the final recommendations contained within the county's **Intellitrends** study.

County Role

Develop strategies/partnerships between the education and business communities designed to stress the importance of post-secondary education which targets students, parents, educators, workers and employers.

Support and increase internship and mentoring opportunities for high school and college students that are in alignment with local business needs.

Enhance and publicize formal post-secondary education opportunities for adults - i.e. launch a "returning to learning initiative" media campaign.

Increase public awareness of career paths and career planning resources - i.e. Macomb County Michigan Works!

**DEVELOP A GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE BETTER ABLE TO SUPPORT
AND PROVIDE LEADERSHIP IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

<i>Rationale / Benefits</i>	<i>County Role</i>
<p>A County Executive form of government would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership for an aggressive economic development initiative. • Create a strategic vision and garner and allocate the resources within the county to fulfill that vision. • Provide leadership continuity. • Be elected by the entire voter population of the county and be accountable to all its citizenry. • Create a single point of contact and command a significant voice in the region. • Permit the county to compete for economic growth opportunities at the same level as its regional peers. 	<p>The Macomb County Board of Commissioners should place the County Executive Issue on the ballot as soon as practically possible, so that an Executive can be elected no later than November 2008.</p>

**DEDICATE RESOURCES FOR RESEARCH AND FORECASTING TO PROJECT FUTURE WORKFORCE,
EDUCATION AND RETRAINING NEEDS FOR BOTH EXISTING AND EMERGING BUSINESSES**

<i>Rationale / Benefits</i>	<i>County Role</i>
<p>The <i>Intellitrends</i> study reinforces the continuing need for vigilant forecasting, assessing and reassessing the economic climate of the county and the region to ensure we are proactive in developing and maintaining a “market ready” workforce. The workforce is seen as a key element for marketing the county when seeking and attracting new foreign and domestic business.</p>	<p>Appropriate additional staff and fund resources for forecasting that are aligned with the recommendations.</p> <p>Develop a survey of existing county businesses to leverage what labor market forecasting data may be available.</p> <p>Provide an annual forecast to monitor the labor market needs identified in the emerging sectors sections of the <i>Intellitrends</i> study.</p> <p>Establish a virtual library of data resources and information that can be accessed as a collaborative planning tool by the business and education communities.</p>

ESTABLISH A COMMITTEE TO SHOWCASE AND PROMOTE THE
MULTI-CULTURAL ASPECTS OF MACOMB COUNTY

<i>Rationale / Benefits</i>	<i>County Role</i>
The perception of the county as embracing multi-cultural is critical to our economic success and an integral part of a unified marketing and media strategy.	<p>Develop a multicultural advisory group comprised of multi-culturally diverse business leaders to access what talent, resources and support networks currently exist within the county.</p> <p>Develop a business case that supports the acceptance of business models that embrace, encourage and promote multiculturalism in the workplace.</p> <p>Promote and integrate the business case with other economic development strategies and initiatives.</p>

SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF 4-YEAR
PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

<i>Rationale / Benefits</i>	<i>County Role</i>
Macomb County must bridge the skills gap between the existing and emerging technical and professional sectors as outlined in the <i>Intellitrends</i> study.	Aggressively lobby for legislation that would authorize public 4-year programs in Macomb County.

DEVELOP A UNIFIED MEDIA AND MARKETING STRATEGY THAT PROMOTES MACOMB COUNTY'S
"MARKET READY" WORKFORCE AND CUSTOMIZED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

<i>Rationale / Benefits</i>	<i>County Role</i>
It is imperative that Macomb County develops a unified media and marketing strategy for attracting identified emerging businesses and retaining existing ones.	<p>Develop and execute an inclusive media and marketing campaign.</p> <p>Provide appropriate staff and funding resources to be aggressive in both plan development and marketing the county's economic opportunities regionally, nationally and globally.</p>



Quality of Life Committee Recommendations

Introduction:

Increasingly, businesses locate, and employees move, based on quality of life as well as on economic considerations. The quality of life in metropolitan Detroit, particularly in Macomb County, is therefore important in this County's efforts to maintain and attract both business investment and a knowledgeable and dynamic workforce, especially in the industries that will define the 21st Century.

Macomb County, as we know, has an abundance of water, excellent educational institutions, health care, cultural and activity attractions, and a balance between urban and rural development. It has a low crime rate, housing costs that are enviable, and excellent recreational opportunities. The County, however, suffers from negative public opinion and that perception hinders our ability to attract the businesses necessary to provide decent and stable employment opportunities. The County must therefore address these perceptions in order to succeed in maintaining current, and growing new, businesses.

Our Committee has, over the past five months, studied Quality of Life considerations and, through careful evaluation of many factors, identified three areas of opportunity; one of immediate, one of near-term, and one of longer range importance. These build sequentially, one on another. Phase 1 will help us do a better job of promoting the County to residents and non-residents, through better use of existing resources, such as the County's website. Phase 2 will help us expand that ability in ways that do not yet exist; and will also encourage QoL development in ways not yet envisioned. Phase 3 will help the County address deficiencies and grow in attractiveness. Our recommendations follow:

#1 Strengthen Capacity of Existing Systems:

Significant issue and solution – there is a lack of awareness (within and outside the County) of the County's many attractions. This leads to a perception that the County is a less desirable place to live and work which, in turn, makes business attraction more difficult. Effective promotion of the County's outstanding features would lessen, or dispel, negative attitudes shared by residents and non-residents alike.

Presentation Idea #1: Promote awareness through the existing County Website, as an immediate goal. We want this to be the primary "go to" place for those seeking information about events and attractions. Subsequently expand to other non-computer systems such as churches and stores.

Commitments of the Business Community - Businesses will...

- Support the website by buying ads. This will provide resources to help the County

maintain & ensure relevancy. We will ultimately link the website to related sites (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, institutions and businesses).

- Provide timely updates concerning features and events, as well as other information to maintain currency and relevance.
- Encourage employees of area businesses to use the system(s) developed by sharing information with them.
- The QoL Committee will, moreover, serve as a communication arm to promote this work through County Departments.

Actions required by the County - The County MUST support Committee (and staff) efforts to implement these initiatives.

#2 Build Capacity to Promote Attractions:

Significant issue and solution – there is an intermediate need, beyond that cited above, to expand our ability to promote County attractions, and stimulate further commitment among business and other leaders to strengthening the public's awareness that Macomb County is a great place to live and work. This will further dispel, negative attitudes shared by residents and non-residents alike.

Commitments of the Business Community - Businesses will...

- Coordinate w/Macomb Foundation (spot/annual awards for contributions, e.g. Alexander Macomb Award for individuals or organizations which promote the quality of Macomb County life).
- Establish a County "Executive Club" (municipal, school, institutional & business CEO's) to discuss issues and encourage implementation of QoL Committee ideas.
- Expand the promotional effort into less traditional outlets, e.g. HR Depts., local cable stations, e-mails to business membership lists (Automation Alley), newsprint and radio.

Actions required by the County – The County MUST support Committee (and staff) efforts to implement the initiatives.

#3 Grow the County's Attractions:

Significant Issue and Resolution – We have not made adequate use of our abundant water resources, which is unique to Macomb and Wayne Counties. If we could tap them for recreational purposes, we could materially and significantly improve the County's image among residents and non-residents alike, and enhance business attraction efforts. The following long-term recommendations must therefore be implemented.

Commitments of the Business Community - Businesses will...

- Stimulate business development along the lake and river. Over the long term we should partner with the Detroit Heritage River Project to create synergies with our shared resources.
- Evaluate the need for parks and recreational facilities, based on current need and in anticipation of future growth.
- Develop non-motorized trails, and other forms of non-motorized transport.

Actions required by the County. It is critical that the County...

- Take a lead role in quantifying and qualifying the type(s) of need.
- Forge partnerships with other entities in the region which share our agenda.
- Identify, in conjunction with the committee, ways to financially support the growth of County attractions.



Transportation Subcommittee Recommendations

Mission Statement

The mission of the Focus Macomb Transportation Committee is to analyze the transportation issues and problems that adversely affect Macomb County. Its goal is to formulate recommended solutions that enhance the County's economic development environment, improve the quality of life for residents and strengthen our ability to compete in today's changing economy.

Issues

The Transportation Committee met with multiple transportation experts in an effort to accurately assess and identify the major transportation issues affecting Macomb County. The following issues and recommendations are the result of these extensive fact-finding sessions and Committee discussions.

The purpose of all community transportation networks is to safely and efficiently move goods and people. Macomb County's continued success is directly tied to our ability to provide an efficient and safe road network and comprehensive transportation system that meets the needs of our residents and businesses. Proper transportation planning and improvements will ensure the County remains a vibrant community where people and business want to locate.

A. Roads

The County's road system is the foundation of our transportation network, and traffic congestion and poor roadway conditions are the most significant adversities that challenge the success of this overall network. Significant roadway maintenance and improvement is necessary in order to simply maintain our roads to an acceptable standard, let alone implement the improvements necessary to meet the demands of our growing citizen population and business community. Our traffic congestion and poor roadway conditions must be addressed now because these problems consistently threaten the safety of our roadway travelers and adversely affect our economy during a time where economic development and growth is crucial in our County. By properly maintaining and improving our roads, this will ease our traffic congestion problem, promote a better quality of life for the citizens of our county, provide safe roadways for the transport of our senior citizens and children, and ultimately spur economic development.

B. Funding

Macomb County is currently faced with a large transportation-funding deficit. For example, The Road Commission of Macomb County has identified a need for \$272 million in today's dollars over the next ten (10) years to simply complete its Road Improvement Plan, only \$100 million of which will be funded by state and federal sources. All the while, available Michigan Transportation Fund ("MTF") dollars are decreasing. This astonishing figure does not reflect the cost of incorporating additional transportation alternatives into the system.

Continued reliance upon state and federal funding to meet our County's transportation needs is unrealistic and impractical. Existing federal and state funding formulas do not currently and will not in the future provide the necessary dollars to address vital improvements, maintenance and money needed to ensure that our roadways and larger transportation network operate efficiently.

C. Technical Committee & Education

Numerous modes of transportation exist within the county and the issues involved with each are complex. Currently, no official body of professionals exists in Macomb County that is charged with the comprehensive assessment of the County's transportation network. A unified effort to address roads, mass transit, community transit, air, water, rail and pedestrian networks is needed. As part of this process, broad community education and awareness is critical.

D. Transportation Alternatives

Our communities function on the ability to efficiently connect all people to businesses, places of employment, community and family. While the majority of these connections will continue to be made by private automobile, efficient alternatives must be available to those who cannot or chose not to travel by car.

Seniors, low-income residents, the disabled and youth are the four groups that currently rely on transportation alternatives (mass transit and pedestrian networks). The need for these options will increase in the future. In fact, 1 in 4 County residents will be over the age of 65 in less than 25 years and studies show that as the age of seniors increases the reliance on transportation alternatives also increases.

E. Multimodal Transportation – Movement of Commercial Goods

A diverse transport network of truck, rail, air and water allows our businesses and communities to properly function, maintain a competitive advantage and continue to attract new investment. As the County's population and consumption of goods increases, the demand for freight will continue to grow. Also, the growth of our manufacturing and service industries is directly linked to the development and operation of a seamless goods transport network for their "on-demand" operations.

1. Romeo Airport

The Romeo Airport represents an opportunity to increase economic development within the County while providing additional benefits to current and future businesses. Oakland County airports demonstrate the positive impacts such transportation facilities hold. The three airports employ 800 private sector employees, average 500 to 600 flights per day, and contribute \$160 million in economic impact to the area a year. For these reasons, the Transportation Committee supports the County's initiative to investigate potential ownership of the Romeo Airport.

Recommendations

A. Funding

Macomb County must adopt a long-term, “self-help” policy in order to address the county’s transportation issues and generate sufficient revenue to fill the transportation funding gap if we are to preserve and further the County’s economic vitality. The Committee has identified two possible local transportation funding mechanisms to address road improvements and initiatives to address congestion:

- 1) Capture the full allowable County millage rate of 4.5685 mills and dedicate the remaining 0.3685 mills directly to road improvements and initiatives to address congestion throughout our County. This millage increase would generate approximately \$11.2 million a year and cost each Macomb County household \$27.38 a year; or
- 2) Develop a voter approved local transportation millage dedicated to road improvements and initiatives to address congestion throughout our County.

B. Technical Transportation Committee

Because numerous modes of transportation exist within the county and the issues involved with each are complex, Macomb County must establish an ongoing transportation advisory board consisting of select, qualified transportation experts to assist the Focus Macomb Transportation Committee and other organizations in developing a unified and comprehensive transportation network for the County. The Committee charge will be:

- Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the County’s transportation system and develop sound and practical strategies to address transportation issues;
- Encourage and develop transportation alternatives;
- Work to develop an appropriate and efficient multimodal network;
- Educate the general public and local stakeholders;
- Provide support to local and regional transportation agencies;
- Work with the business community, local municipalities, chambers of commerce and the Board of Commissioners to gain support for a local funding initiative;
- Continue to educate and offer visible support towards the identified issues and recommendations and work with interested organizations at the local, regional, state and federal levels to create a transportation system that meets the needs of people and businesses throughout Macomb Count

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Speakers List

Richard E. Blouse, Jr.
President & CEO
Detroit Regional Chamber

Craig Bryson
Public Information Officer
Road Commission for Oakland County

I.J. Campbell
Community Development Administrator
City of Roseville

John W. Carroll, Jr.
Senior VP of Business Development
Detroit Regional Chamber

Stephen N. Cassin, AICP
Executive Director
Macomb County Planning & Economic Development

Dan Dirks
General Manager
SMART

Edsel Ford II
Board Director, Ford Motor Company
Chair of Advisory Council, Design Regional Detroit

Robert Hoepfner
Head Engineer
Road Commission of Macomb County

Dan Hunter
Manager
Oakland County Planning & Economic Development Services

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Director, Center for Workforce Development
Macomb Community College

Greg Johnson
Head Engineer
MDOT Metro Region

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Lisa Mauch
Director Member Services
Automation Alley

James Page
Vice Chair
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Gerry Rowe
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